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Security Council

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Identical letters dated 21 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write to inform you of a series of serious incidents in southern Israel and the Gaza Strip that threaten peace and stability in our region.

Earlier today, 21 December 2010, at approximately 8 a.m. local time, a Qassam rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip into the Ashkelon area of southern Israel, landing in Kibbutz Zikim. This rocket exploded near a kindergarten just as dozens of parents were dropping off their children at school, injuring a 14-year-old girl.

The incident follows a spate of attacks emanating from Gaza since 19 December 2010, encompassing the launch of some three rockets and 18 mortars into the regions of Eshkol and Ashkelon in southern Israel. These attacks included the launch of six mortars on 19 December 2010 at Israel Defense Forces operating near the Kerem Shalom Crossing.

The incidents of the past several days are part of an escalation of terrorist attacks emanating from Gaza that target Israeli civilians, towns and military personnel. Israel holds the de facto authority in the Gaza Strip completely responsible for all of these incidents, which are carried out in clear violation of international law. In response to such attacks, Israel has exercised and will continue to exercise its right to self-defence.

In a previous letter dated 9 December 2010 (S/2010/623), I mentioned that the escalation of such attacks should be viewed with the utmost seriousness. With the intention of preventing the continued escalation of conflict, the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the international community must send a clear and resolute message that these attacks are unacceptable.

In addition, the Security Council must give appropriate attention to the smuggling of arms into Gaza, which continues to fuel violence and instability in our region, in violation of numerous Security Council resolutions, including resolution 1860 (2009).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Meron **Reuben**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations

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